



Amarillo Multimodal Transfer Terminal 5339 Grant Application

I. Project Description

The City of Amarillo (COA) is requesting funds for the construction of a Multimodal Terminal to replace one public and one private outdated, too small passenger terminals that serves residents in the Texas Panhandle. Amarillo is an economic, cultural and medical center for most of the 26 counties that make up the Panhandle. Amarillo City Transit (ACT), Greyhound and Panhandle Transit are the primary service providers in the region.

Amarillo City Transit, a department of the City of Amarillo, identified the need for a new terminal as a result of the Transit Master Plan process in 2016. Funding for a new terminal was programmed in the 2016 Bond Election which did not pass.

ACT contacted Greyhound in late 2017 to explore interest in a joint facility. ACT applied for a competitive grant from the Texas Department of Transportation in February 2018 to fund a feasibility study for a new multimodal terminal. In February 2019 Lavin Architects was awarded the contract to conduct the five month study to determine space requirements, identify a site, develop schematics and complete the Phase I Environment Study.

A. Current Conditions and Challenges

1. Amarillo City Transit

In December 2016 the City of Amarillo and its consultant began a Master Planning Process to revitalize the transit system. The last time the transit system had been studied was in 1992. Only minor route changes had been made to the Amarillo City Transit (ACT) route network until August 31, 2018 when the ACT Master Plan recommendations were implemented. ACT went from an 8 route system to a 13 route network. One route is a circulator in the Harrington Medical Center and does not use the downtown terminal.

<https://amarillo.gov/departments/community-services/transit/fixed-route-information/new-bus-routes> .

The new route network was designed to eliminate long ride times, circuitous routing and long waits to transfer between buses. The new service model required twelve buses to meet at the transfer station five times a day and a minimum of eight buses meet during the remainder of the day. Approximately 35% of ACT's 275,000 annual fixed-route passengers transfer at the downtown terminal or nearly 100,000 people each year. Under the current operation all buses arrive, deboard passengers, and depart within a maximum of 20 minutes every 45 minutes to an hour.

The ACT bus terminal is located at 219 S. Fillmore St. (U.S. 87) and 3rd Avenue in downtown Amarillo. The facility occupies about one quarter of a city block (0.39 acres). The terminal was put into service in 2002 at a cost of \$417,812 paid for through a FTA grant (TX-90-X-465-01)

administered through the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). The City provided the land for the site at a cost of \$45,000. Nearing the end of its useful life, ACT recently rated the condition of the terminal as a “3” in its Transit Asset Management Plan (TAMP) indicating the condition of the facility is in need of major repairs.

The terminal can only accommodate six to eight therefore, four buses must park on the busy U.S. 87. ACT currently operates 30 vehicles that are 28 or 32 feet in length. On July 9, 2019 the City of Amarillo agreed to purchase six (6) 35 foot Gillig buses to be delivered in spring of 2020. This will further constrain operations at the current terminal. ACT expects that over the next 20 years the maximum number of vehicle at the terminal will grow to 18.

The current terminal has a small indoor waiting area with two public rest rooms and a small driver break room with rest room. The driver break room and rest room are used by both fixed-route and paratransit drivers. The facility does not have wireless internet and has no cameras or other remote security. There is no place to sell tickets or passes. Customer must go to City Hall which is 7 blocks from the terminal to buy fare media or travel on the Route 33 to the Transit Office locate 2.8 miles south of the terminal. Some transactions are handled by mail but many customers pay with cash or check.

The ACT terminal is located on the northeast side of downtown, while ACT’s ridership growth lies to the south and west of downtown. The facility is too small, lacks customer services and in need of a major investment and cannot be expanded on the current site. The terminal is adjacent to the now vacant historic Herring Hotel, for which redevelopment plans are contemplated. The City also owns the three parcels to the north of the terminal but are not large enough for a multimodal facility. In addition the bus terminal is incompatible with the redevelopment of the Herring Hotel which needs additional land for parking to be a viable project.

The ACT Transfer Center is about ½ mile north and east of Greyhound’s current bus terminal and about 1.3 miles east of the proposed new multimodal terminal.

2. Greyhound

Greyhound currently operates its own intercity bus terminal at 700 South Tyler Street in downtown Amarillo. Built in 1949, the two-story terminal covers about one-quarter of a city block (0.21 acres) and can accommodate four buses at a time. The facility is a full-service, air-conditioned passenger terminal with areas for ticket sales, administrative offices, passenger waiting and loading, baggage handling and storage, and Greyhound package express delivery service. The building also includes a food preparation and service area. The second floor is used as an office, and the basement is used for storage.

Greyhound operates four intercity routes through the Amarillo station Attachment - Greyhound contains ridership data. Service between Amarillo and El Paso and between Amarillo and San Antonio operate once daily (one arrival and one departure daily on each route) these routes are support by the Texas Department of Transportation. Service between Denver and Dallas through Amarillo operates twice daily (two arrivals and two departures), and service between St. Louis and Phoenix through Amarillo operates four times daily (four arrivals and four departures). A total of thirteen Greyhound buses per day arrive and depart from the terminal.

The State of Texas requires TxDOT to allocate no less than 15% of the annual \$5311 Federal apportionment for the development and support of intercity bus transportation services and facilities to provide access and connections to rural areas in Texas. Greyhound currently receives \$2,488,171 in funding from TxDOT competitive grant programs. The following rural Texas communities are connected to Amarillo via Greyhound service: Dumas, Hereford, Friona, Plainview, Lamesa, Big Springs, Sterling City, San Angelo, Eden, Brady, Mason, Fredericksburg, Kerrville, Comfort, and Boern.

During the most recent one-year period, about 10,000 passengers originated in Amarillo and a similar number were destined to Amarillo. An additional 101, 298 passengers passed through the terminal destined for other locations.

The proposed terminal will combine ACT and Greyhound's operations into one facility, and it will be large enough to allow connections with other transportation providers as well. Panhandle Transit, a service of Panhandle Community Services, a rural provider serving Armstrong, Briscoe, Carson, Castro, Childress, Collingsworth, Dallam, Deaf Smith, Donley, Gray, Hall, Hansford, Hartley, Hemphill, Hutchinson, Lipscomb, Moore, Ochiltree, Oldham, Parmer, Potter, Randall, Roberts, Sherman, Swisher, and Wheeler counties in the Texas Panhandle, will have access to the terminal for the convenience of both its passengers and drivers. Cord Care a small service provider operates service for the Area Agency on Aging will be provided a parking bay at the terminal.

The new terminal will be located on a 2.76 acre site consisting of four parcels. It is bounded by Southwest 5th Avenue, South Bowie Street, Southwest 6th Avenue, and an abandoned railroad right-of-way. The City owns the abandon rail right of way and the remainder of the block to the south and east.

The new terminal would provide eighteen saw tooth bus bays for ACT and one saw tooth bus bay for Panhandle Transit buses within the facility and four pull-in bus bays for Greyhound buses adjacent to the terminal building.

The terminal building will include the following amenities:

- Air conditioned and heated waiting area
- Three small offices, one open office area, and one office that can accommodate two supervisors, with a view of the public waiting area and a good portion of the bus bays for ACT staff
- Information desk and secure area to sell tickets (for use by ACT and Greyhound)
- Small break room for staff (for use by ACT, Greyhound, and Panhandle Transit staff)
- Restrooms for the general public
- Restrooms for staff (ACT, Greyhound, Panhandle Transit)
- Package express and baggage handling area (Greyhound)
- Food service area

Other functions planned for the new terminal include:

- Parking

- Meeting room
- Safe passenger pick-up and drop-off area
- State-of-the-art signage and communications technology

The City of Amarillo's fiber network runs near the identified multimodal site. Access to the network will allow for additional technological improvements such as wireless internet for bus passengers not found in the current location.

Nearby land uses are mostly light industrial, with no conflicts expected. No utility relocations are needed. The triangular parcel southeast of the site (northwest of Southwest 6th Avenue and Parker Street) is already owned by the City of Amarillo, which may allow for either future expansion if needed or the addition of other supporting land uses.

Traffic volumes around the new Multimodal Transfer Terminal site are much lower than around the current transfer center. Traffic counts from 2017 show about 4,900 vehicles per day total (in both directions) along 6th Avenue. Accidents rates are much lower as well, with only four accidents involving seven vehicles and fourteen people in the five-and-a-half years since 2014.

In addition, locating the new terminal further west in downtown moves the transfer location closer to ACT's ridership growth areas in the medical center and Westgate Mall areas. Under the proposed plan, ACT will be able to better serve these areas while still allowing buses to meet for timed transfer's downtown.

B. Project Site

The project site has a unique connection to transportation history in Amarillo. It is located on 6th Avenue which is the old Route 66 through Amarillo. The property was the first auto tourist camp in Amarillo established on the old Potter County Courthouse block in 1923. The original auto camp probably had tents rather than cabins; it was a place where cross-country highway travelers could spend the night for little money and with few conveniences. Later around 1927 cabins were built but no remnants of the cabins remain on the site.

C. Grant Funding

The City is applying for a Federal Transit Administration competitive grant in the amount of \$6,882,540.

Figure 7 Project Schedule

Multimodal Transfer Terminal Project Schedule		
Action Item	Start Date	Completion Date
Land Purchase Completed	In progress	July 29, 2019
Categorical Exclusion Submission	August 1, 2019	September 15, 2019
Project Award Notification		November 12, 2019
TIP/STIP Inclusion	Post Award	
Bidding Process Week after NTP	Week 1	
RFP Development		
RFP Posted		
RFP Review and Award		Week 8
Schematic Design Weeks after NTP	Week 9	
Verify Program		
Site Plan Review		
Plan Revisions		
Schematic Approval		Week 12
Design Development Weeks after NTP	Week 13	
Architectural Site Plan		
Civil/Utilities/Drainage		
Landscape Refinements		
Architectural Floor Plans		
Architectural Elevations		
Structural Design		
Mechanical/Plumbing/Electrical Design		
Design Development OPC Estimate		
Design Development Code Review		
Design Development Approval		Week 20
Construction Documents Weeks after NTP	Week 21	
50% Review Sets		
90% Review Sets		
Consultant Coordination		
100% Review		
Construction Document Approval		
Construction Document Bid Package		Week 36
Bidding Weeks after NTP	Week 37	Week 45
Award Weeks after NTP	Week 46	Week 48
Construction Weeks after NTP	Week 49	Week 101

D. Required Approvals

As demonstrated in the Technical Feasibility section above the City of Amarillo can begin the project quickly upon obligation of grant funds and that those funds will be spent expeditiously once final design is complete and construction starts. Property acquisition will already be complete along with the final CE.

The Multimodal Terminal project is in the Unified Planning Work Program and in discussion with the MPO Director, Travis Muno, insertion of the project in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) can be accomplished in a reasonable period of time.

E. Assessment of Risk and Mitigation Strategies

Lavin Architects believe that construction could take as little as 9 months but the Project Schedule assumes a 12 month construction. The project site has no utilities that need to be relocated providing some advantage. The greatest risk is a weather delay and building extra time into the construction schedule will compensate.

The City of Amarillo recently constructed a \$40 million Multi Purpose Event Venue (MPEV) on time in 12 months and under budget. Experience with large construction project is itself a mitigation strategy.

II. Benefit Cost Analysis

The Benefit Cost Analysis is present as Attachment BCA Text.

Per instruction in *US DOT's Benefit-Cost Analysis Guidance for Discretionary Grant Programs*, December 2018, all costs and benefits are stated in constant 2017 dollars. Any costs stated in other years dollars (generally, 2019 to 2022 dollars) are deflated to 2017 using the 2018 Gross Domestic Product (GDP) deflator for 2018 and the inflation assumption that the City uses for other budgeting activities for the remaining years (2.5% per year). The project costs and monetized benefits are shown in Attachment – BCA Numbers.

Once the annual costs and benefits are calculated and stated in common year dollars (2017), the costs and benefits streams are discounted to a present value in 2020 using a 7% discount rate. In summary, discounted costs equal about \$7.8 million, while discounted monetized benefits equal about \$3.7 million over the twenty-year analysis period.

Clearly, the present value of the costs is much higher than the benefits, because most of the projects benefits are not quantifiable. But the benefits in comfort and security are real. If each of the 220,000 annual passengers using the terminal benefited by a little over \$2 per visit, the benefits of the project would exceed the costs. If you added in the benefits to pedestrian and bicyclists (amenities, access, and safety), travel time savings generated by growth in transit passengers, and economic development benefits, the total would easily exceed the present value of the capital and operating costs of the terminal.